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Title: Need to put in place stringent regulatory mechanism to check rampant use of pesticides in vegetables and fruits posing serious health hazards.

SHRI M.I. SHANAVAS(WAYNAD): The unrestrained use of pesticides in vegetables and fruits is fast becoming a major health hazard across the country. Several reports suggest that cancer and many forms of metastatic cancer are rising in the country. Reports indicate that quantum of pesticides uses by farmers in India is as much as 750 times higher than European standards. Another report states that pesticides are being used in a "growing number of vegetables which have the potential to cause serious neurological problems, kidney damage, skin diseases, cancer and other diseases.

In this scenario, the Government must intervene and put in place strict and stringent controls on unchecked pesticide use. Vegetables and fruits are also adulterated to enhance their shelf life and there are even organized networks that brazenly carry out this activity. There is little that state governments can do with meagre funds and I would urge the Union Government to establish and carry out safety and food standards and release funds for setting up analytical labs at district levels to detect toxicity of vegetables and fruits that are slated for consumption.

The Government must also bring amendments to the existing body of legislation concerning food adulteration and food safety standards and award exemplary punishment.